MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET

IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • OCTOBER 2001

BY AGNES DIKEMAN

The Rentschler Farm Museum Saline, Michigan

There are two kinds of museums in Saline. One is for exhibits in display cases, and this is located at the Depot. The other is a living history museum on farming, and that is what we've done at the Rentschler Farm. Known as Saline's Family Farm, the **Rentschler Farm Museum** embodies farm life representative of all farm families in the Saline area, particularly those of German descent. Four generations of Rentschlers lived at the farm in the 20th century. They were typical of any number of German farm families.

Photo courtesy Agnes Dikeman

1912 photo of Emanuel Rentschler and wife Elizabeth at the Rentschler Farm.

Johann Georg Rentschler immigrated from Germany in **1849** with his wife **Kunigunda Dieterle** and two sons, one of whom was born on board ship during the trip across the Atlantic Ocean. They arrived in Michigan and settled in **Freedom Twp.** In due time, it appears the family numbered 14 children.

One child was **Emanuel Rentschler,** born 1864 in **Lodi Twp.** He married **Elizabeth Burkhardt** in Saline, 1892. Initially, they had a farm in Lodi Twp., but in 1904 Emanuel was offered the chance to buy 216 acres that we know today as the Rentschler Farm. It stood on the old Chicago Road, east of the Village of Saline. There were several buildings on the site, as well as an old house on the south side of the road. Emanuel's older brother, Matthew, was a builder by trade, and in 1906 Matthew built the Queen Anne style house for Emanuel, his wife, and three children.

About this same time, Emanuel, his father, and his brother took it upon themselves to move the large barn which stood perpendicular to the Chicago Road. The men were concerned about Old Maud, the Interurban, which rumbled past the farmstead every day. What if a spark borne on the wind would land on the barn roof? Using farmers natural ingenuity, they jacked up the large building and put it on logs. Using powerful teams of draft horses, they moved the barn back from the road and turned it parallel. That having been done, they added some additional footage to one end and put a new gambrel roof in place, creating additional space for hay storage and giving the barn a height of 45 ft. on the west end.

One of Emanuel's sons was **Herman Rentschler**, born c.1896. In 1919, Herman married **Elsie M. Bredernitz** in Saline Twp. About this time, the elder Rentschlers moved to an apartment in town and offered the farmhouse to Herman and his family, which eventually grew to

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November Program

On **Sunday, November 18, at 2 PM, Cynthia Furlong Reynolds** will discuss ***"A History of Chelsea from Residents' Memories."*** It will be held at the Chelsea Retirement Community.

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Annual dues are individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

BY WAYNE CLEMENTS

A Taste Of Salt

About 30 people turned out Sunday September 15 at the Rentschler Farm after a week of sadness and anger following the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. WCHS got a taste of salt (i.e., a history of the Saline Area) from Wayne, the political story of how and why the farm was purchased from the Rentschlers by the city from former mayor ***Rich Kuss****, and a little about the farm museum from* ***Agnes Dikeman.*** *Former County Clerk* ***Bob Harrison*** *gave tours of the barns, which now have an exhibit about the* ***Underground Railroad*** *organized by* ***Carol Mull*** *of the Kempf House in Ann Arbor.* ***Louisa Pieper*** *raved about the tour and the farmstead and how interesting it is to see the evolution of the farm to a mechanized business. Thanks to* ***Ann*** *and* ***Greg DeFreytas*** *for providing the refreshments.*

Salt has been very important throughout history and the Latin ***sal*** gives us the words salt, salary and Saline. Water and salt in the early days were essential to survival and our Indian predecessors established no less than six well-defined trails to the salt wells along the Saline River south of the village. Saline's first permanent settler was Leonard Miller who arrived in 1826. Shortly thereafter, Orange Risdon arrived in 1832 after surveying the Sauk Trail from Detroit to Chicago. Risdon surveyed and officially named the village Saline and is honored today as its founder. He died November 27, 1876 and is buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

Four townships—Lodi, York, Pittsfield and Saline, which compose the SAHS area—-surround the village of Saline and were the backbone of its productive farming. Many centennial farms still exist in the gently rolling countryside. In their early years, they depended on the village for supplies and thus prompted the development of feed mills, creameries, newspapers and hardware stores. When the railroad came to Saline in 1870, the village also offered these townships a way to ship their grain and cattle products to wider markets.

Saline retains a 'look' of its earlier days, and many residents are descended from the early pioneers and have a direct interest in preservation. They are

Photo courtesy Wayne Clements

Saline Depot and Caboose, 1998. HQ of the SAHS.

supported today in that effort by new residents, businesses, local government, the Historic Commission and the Historical Society. The landscape in and around Saline is composed of many buildings over 100 years old, including homes, farms, barns, churches, businesses and the occasional windmill. Dairy farms, woods, corn and wheat fields, sheep farms and even a one-room school are found along the Saline River and the many streams feeding into it. The one-room schools, active in serving the educational needs of the community from 1831 to 1950, now stand mostly abandoned.

Building upon solid traditions and heritage, the progressive residents of Saline over the years have made the necessary additions and changes to keep pace with lifestyles quite different from that of the early settlers. The village was incorporated on October 18, 1866, and the first election was scheduled for Tuesday, November 27, the day of founder Orange Risdon's death in 1876. From this beginning, Saline has built new banks, high schools, hospitals, recreational parks, industrial parks, churches and housing. Good planning and the blending of newcomers with old timers, all drawn to Saline by its quiet history and charm, has maintained a quality of life that would make the village founders proud.

Since the revival of the SAHS in 1987, the goal of 'bringing local history to the attention of the community as often and in as many ways as possible through preservation and education' has been at work. Slow at first, but ever increasing.

Looking ahead for us back in 1987 was a bit overwhelming. We were a small society, with little funding and no place to call our own. Looking back now in 2001, it is obvious, as the saying goes, "you must crawl before you can walk." We did a lot of learning together.

We know now that four major areas influenced our progress:

1. Emphasizing "why we do what we do" really got our attention when during a regular monthly meeting at the senior center with a number of high school history students, one boy asked "Why do you do all this?" What we thought was obvious to all, was not! We began at once to associate local history with community identity, respect for those before us, and a way to link all ages, especially teenagers. Our population growth over the past 14 years has presented a challenge to get the message out. It has also acted as a catalyst for our preservation efforts.
2. Establishing a working relationship with city government has been a prime factor in increasing historical awareness.
3. The reality of a succession of abandoned structures provided continuing opportunities for preservation and education.
4. Going to a team format with (16) qualified and dedicated members, with each assuming a specific responsibility, has increased our output with less time spent. This format helps generate more volunteers, is flexible, and provides for informal additions and continuing leadership for the future.

All four areas were part of our first project in 1987. The Saline Standard Windmill was abandoned——in parts——at the city service center. No action had been taken since the mill was donated to the city by Mr. Wiedmeyer, a Saline Township farmer. The HDC asked for our help. It took time, but the Society put the mill together, entered it in the Saline Fair Parade and presto—we had a connection with the city, recognition by the community, identity for

Saline and an abandoned structure preserved. A good start for us!

This success was followed in 1988 and 1992 with a designer showcase tour of two abandoned houses in Pittsfield Township. The Robert Tefft and Webster Turkey Farmstead were fixed up and each project resulted in great PR for the society and an expansion of our volunteer base. Two abandoned homes were preserved, and they are still going strong today through the efforts of the people who purchased them during the showcase. The Grebs in the Tefft house are now operating team members of SAHS.

A third stimulus for us was the threat of demolition of an abandoned livery barn with connections to founder Orange Risdon. The elements of our success came together again with the City of Saline offering a space for the barn to be re-assembled on the city-owned Depot site. Volunteers, including a timber framer, put in many hours and in 1991 the livery barn was presented to the city and Mayor Pat Little accepted. The wooden windmill now had a home. This was more good PR.

The next catalyst was the abandoned rail depot which sat next to the newly restored livery barn! The city was on board and we had a good track record. After a great deal of planning, funding and project work to bring the building up to code, the society was ready to sign a lease to operate the depot as a community museum. Exhibits were mounted and on July 4, 1995, the Depot Museum opened, 125 years to the day that the first train came to Saline! The mayor, council members, and many from the community attended the dedication, which was videotaped and shown on local TV. The SAHS now meets at the Depot Museum in the shadow of our community artifacts. It is open to the public on Saturdays from 11 to 3.

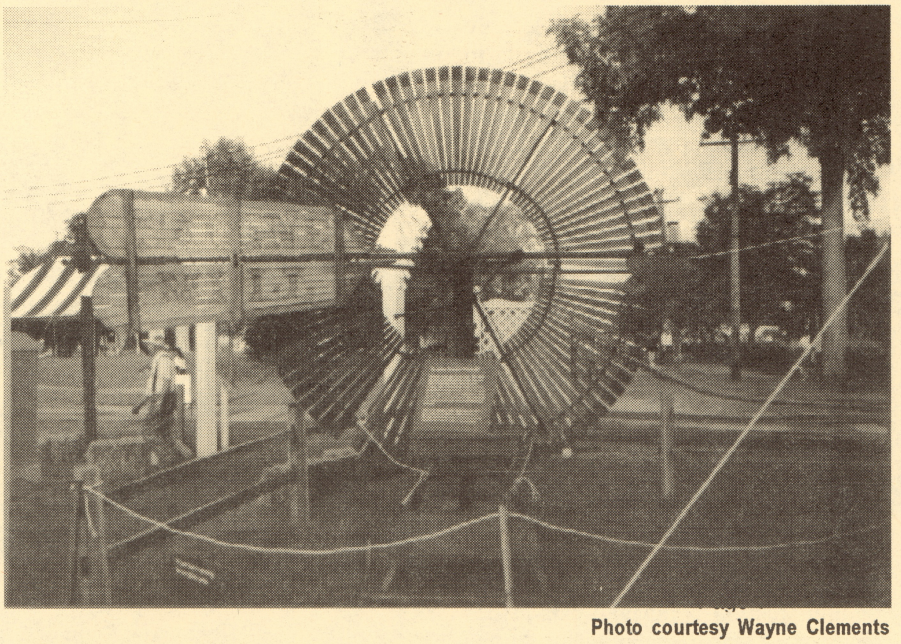

Photo courtesy Wayne Clements

Windmill restored by the Saline Area Hist. Society, 1991.

In 1997, we were informed that another item needed to be rescued. A 1906 caboose needed a new home since its owner, Norm Harden, had died and the car had to be moved from South Lyon. Private donations and the city of Saline provided funding to purchase and move this fully restored wooden Grand Trunk caboose to the tracks next to the Depot Museum. Our first tour followed the arrival of the caboose October 29, 1997.

Following this, the City of Saline supported the completion of a Saline area history video, initiated by the Chamber of Commerce, which gave the community the opportunity to bring in photos of old buildings and family members. Many were donated, the photos were digitized, and they are now available on our Saline historic photo website. The video was completed in 1997, as was the website. See **http://saline.lib.mi.us/.**

It was at this propitious time, when momentum for historic preservation was at a high level in Saline, that the most wonderful of all projects was proposed. The Rentschler family planned to leave their farm on East Michigan Avenue after almost 95 years of farming. No one wanted to see this farm abandoned. The City of Saline, with Mayor Kuss fresh from the Depot Museum dedication, the historic video, and the caboose project, was very much ready to negotiate with Warren Rentschler. As a result, the city purchased the farm and then worked with the SAHS to plan for its future. Based on the success of the three-year lease on the Depot, the SAHS proposed a similar lease

Photo courtesy Wayne Clements

Blaess One-Room Schoolhouse - the next restoration project for the Saline Area Hist. Society.

arrangement for the operation of the farm, to be known as "Saline's family farm museum." The city liked the idea of showcasing the area's farming heritage and a unique partnership was established. The SAHS is now celebrating its third "Harvest Time" farm-closing event on October 6, 2001, from 11-4. Everyone is invited. The spring opening in May drew a thousand visitors of all ages.

Society volunteers are even more active than ever in keeping regular hours at both the depot and the farm museum as well as giving school tours and hosting special events. It is very rewarding to see this farm preserved and it is proving to be of increasing value to the community. Support has come from area farmers, the schools, the 4-H and the Boy Scouts. Our goal of increasing community identity and communication opportunities between generations is realized daily at the farm in particular.

What next? The SAHS is cooperating with the Saline schools and alumni association to preserve—guess what? — another abandoned structure! Janet and Milton Weidmayer have given the Blaess Country School in Lodi Township to the Saline schools. The schools have designated an acre of land, near the elementary schools, as the new Blaess site so that children can visit easily. The move is scheduled for 2002.

In striving for balanced growth, our city has been very supportive of historic preservation and education efforts. We are sure that other abandoned structures will need to be rescued and the society looks forward to helping restore their meaning and history, resulting in even more injections of community pride in the future.

Donations

Collections Chair Judy Chrisman announced receipt of several items from **Susan Wineberg**: a leather bound packet of **ration books** from World War II; a *liederbuch* or song book from the **German Park Recreation Club;** a record album issued by **Ann Arbor Federal Savings** celebrating their new building; and a blueprint of the **Washtenaw County Fair Buildings and Concession Area** from the early 20th century. **Ann** and **Greg DeFreytas** donated an American flag which we have been flying from our second floor window.

Photo courtesy Agnes Dikeman

Rentschler Farm with all its outbuildings ca. 1900.

Continued from page 1.

seven children. Emanuel continued to help on the farm as long as he was able.

Herman's second oldest son, **Warren,** was born in 1924. Warren and his brothers, together with their father and grandfather, worked the farm and continued to raise sheep, dairy cattle, hay, corn, and grains. In 1959 Warren married **Marilyn Hertler** of **York Twp.** Following family tradition, it wasn't long before Herman and his wife thought seriously about moving to smaller quarters. Shortly after Warren and Marilyn's first child was born, the elder parents built a beautiful brick ranch-style house to the east of the farm. It was convenient so that Herman could continue to work the farmland with Warren.

Farmers oftentimes had hired hands to help, especially during busy seasons. Warren was no exception. Since he and Marilyn had two girls, Warren hired nephews or sons of friends. The hired hands would sleep over and take their meals with the farm family. On Sundays, they went home to their own family.

A portion of the farm was sold in the 1960s, when **Ford Motor Co.** came to Saline looking for property on which to build their paint and plastics plant. The least productive acreage was on the west side, so that went first. Gradually, other smaller pieces were sold.

Finally, in 1995, with four acres and the buildings remaining, Mr. Rentschler thought it was time to retire. A stroke of luck occurred when the City of Saline decided to purchase the property as a buffer between the Industrial Park, a shopping center and other commercial establishments, and downtown Historic Saline.

In 1998, the Saline Area Historical Society signed a five-year lease with the city, allowing it to operate the farm as a museum. The city continues to maintain the exterior of each building, but the historical society furnishes and maintains the interiors. The outbuildings are interpreted as 1900-1950 to show changes between farming with horses and farming with tractors. The house is interpreted as 1930, with some pieces (as any family would have) being slightly earlier.

The historical society is a non-profit group, whose members number less than 150. A core group of about fifteen volunteers staff both the Rentschler Farm and the Saline Depot museums.

The farm is open to visitors on Saturdays 11:00-3:00, except holiday weekends, from May through early October. Two big events take place annually, **Spring Time on the Farm** in May and **Harvest Time** in October. Admission is free and parking is available at all times in the shopping center lot, with a nice walk into the farmsite from the back of the buildings. Volunteers are eager to offer tours and special arrangements can be made for groups. Call **734-944-0442** for reservations.

Doris Anna Bach Estate Left To WCHS

On January 18, 2001, longtime member and contributor **Doris Anna Bach** died in Kalamazoo. She was the only child of Waldo Botsford and Mabel (Stacey) Bach, and granddaughter of Anna Botsford Bach. Doris attended the University of Michigan and received an AB in 1931 and an MA in 1932. She worked at the UM Biological Station and as an assistant in the UM Botany Department. She later taught botany at Kalamazoo Central High School and retired in 1969. Doris Anna was the last of a long line of Bach and Botsford family members who took an active role in the historical society.

Doris was one of our largest and most consistent donors, as had been her family in the past. So, we were not too surprised to hear over the summer that she had left a gift through her estate to the WCHS. We have had so many artifacts donated to us that it required us to rent a storage facility to accommodate the 1000 cu. feet of crates of materials, which included much furniture and bric-a-brac. Many have volunteered to help with uncrating and cataloguing the items but Collections Chair **Judy Chrisman** has her work cut out for her.

Substantial investments have also been willed to us. With the help of **Patty Creal** our treasurer and **Bob Creal,** our attorney for this project, **President Pauline Walters** has assembled a committee of WCHS members to determine how this money should be invested. This committee, composed of **Ralph Beebe, David Sager, Jay Snyder, Rosemarion Blake, Tom Freeman, Susan Wineberg, Richard Galant and Patty Creal**, has met with representatives of three investment institutions to learn about our options. We hope to use the interest from this investment to eventually fund a staff position at the museum. This would either be a curator or a museum director. Discussions are now underway to determine the best course of action.

Program Schedule 2001-2001

Our intrepid Program Chair, **Louisa Pieper**, has again come up with a fantastic schedule for the coming year. Our aim is to 'get out into the county' and we hope you will enjoy it. All programs are on the third Sunday of the month, from 2-4, and are free and open to the public. Light refreshments are often served. Members receive a post card each month with more details and maps of how to reach the meetings.

Sunday • October 21, 2001 2 PM

Warren Hale of the **Hack House in Milan** will discuss the history of this Queen Anne house now under extensive renovation and the history of Milan as well. A story in the *Ann Arbor News* last August showcased the restoration using a $28,000 state grant and $19,000 from the city. Built by Olive Friend in 1888, it was purchased by the Hack family and has been a museum since 1990. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sunday • November 4, 2001 2 PM

Carol Mull will speak on **"Freedom Bound: The Underground Railroad in Washtenaw County."** This is being co-sponsored with the **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission** and will be held at **Greenhills School** Auditorium.

Tuesday • November 6, 2001 7-8:30 PM

Opening Reception for an **exhibit on the Underground Railroad** at the **Ann Arbor District Library, Main Branch,** co-sponsored with the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission. On **Thursday, November 8** WCHS Board Member **Karen Simpson** will be demonstrating quilting at the library from 7-8:30 PM.

Sunday • November 18, 2001 2 PM

Cynthia Furlong Reynolds will discuss **"A History of Chelsea from Residents' Memories."** It will be held at the Chelsea Retirement Community Center.

Sunday • February 17, 2002 2 PM

In honor of **Black History Month**, we will have **Jim Mays** speaking on **"The Story of the Buffalo Soldiers."** He will discuss the history of this group and the organization that exists today to perpetuate the memory of this valiant group of long forgotten soldiers.

Sunday • March 24, 2002 2 PM

(note this is NOT the third Sunday)

Tammy Szatkowski will give us a tour of the **UM Dental [Gordon H. Sindecuse] Museum**, a fascinating and overlooked museum in the heart of the U-M Campus. See collections of old toothpaste tins, tooth brushes, false teeth and dentists' offices, much from the collection of **Dr. Ron** and **Maggie Berris.**

Sunday • April 21, 2002 2 PM

Rachel Szymanski will speak on **Katherine Dexter McCormick.** Rachel won a gold award for her project on the granddaughter of Samuel Dexter, founder of the Village of Dexter. She is an 11th grade student at Dexter High School and a Girl Scout. Katherine McCormick was active in the women's suffrage movement and an early supporter of the birth control movement led by Margaret Sanger. She also hired architect Prof. Emil Lorch to restore her grandfather's home, **Gordon Hall**, and later donated it to the University of Michigan. The University is planning to sell this historic estate and its surrounding acreage, and this has created some controversy since the Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS) would very much like to purchase it to be their museum.

Wednesday • May 15, 2002 6 PM

Annual Meeting and **Potluck** will be held in **Ypsilanti** at the **Ladies Literary Club.**

Around The Town

We have a new **Historic Preservation Coordinator** for the City of Ann Arbor. **Mary Culver** resigned over the summer for health reasons, and the city has hired **Heather Edwards** to replace her. Heather formerly worked for the SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) in Lansing and was a unanimous choice. We look forward to working with her in the future.

Ann Arbor officially became a city **150 years ago (another Sesquicentennial!)** and many celebrations are planned for this month. The biggest, however, will be held on **Friday, October 19,** from noon-1 PM in at Larcom City Hall. The goal is to create the world's largest **ribbon-cutting event**, so all are invited to come on down as the newest **Downtown Street Exhibit** marker on "The Growth of City Services" is dedicated. The ceremony will be followed by cake, an old tradition in Ann Arbor. The City is also collecting items for a **time capsule,** and **Louisa Pieper** and **Nancy Stone** have mounted an exhibit at the entrance to City Hall. Also mark **Wednesday, November 14** on your calendars. At 4 PM at Main and William, eight more of the historic markers will be formally dedicated. Donors and volunteers will be feted on the top floor of Ashley Mews! For more information call **734-994-4176** or check the city's website at **www.a2gov.org.** You can also e-mail Nancy at **nstone@ci.ann-arbor.mi.us.**

There is a new **Local History Room** at the **Ann Arbor District Library** to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of people doing family genealogy. It is in the westernmost part of the second floor, where the newspapers used to be kept. It opened without much fanfare over the summer, but it is a wonderful place to research your ancestors, or the history of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County. It has City Directories, County Atlases and histories, old phone books, local history materials, and even a complete set of *Ann Arbor Scene Magazine* from the 1970s. A six-page handout helps you search for your ancestors.

The library is also sponsoring a discussion group with long time Ann Arbor Main Street merchants on **Tuesday, October 23**, from 7:00-8:30. **Walter Metzger**, former proprietor of Metzger's German Restaurant, **Irene Patalan**, owner of Collected Works, and others will recall their memories and current impressions of Downtown Ann Arbor. Local historian **Grace Shackman** will give a brief online tour of historic Main St. This program compliments the October 28 discussion of the Sinclair Lewis classic book *Main Street.*

The **Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County** will meet on **Sunday, October 28** at 1:30 PM in the Auditorium of the Education Center at St. Joseph Hospital, McAuley Health Center, 5305 Elliott Drive. Look for parking lot "P" and check for their signs. **John DuLong** will speak on "***French-Canadian Research with some insights into Upper Peninsula Research.***" Dr. DuLong has written many books on this subject and will also bring information on the Advocates of the Burton Historical Collection. After the speaker, there will be a **silent auction** of excess books and periodicals owned by the Society.

It's not too early to plan for Christmas! **Cobblestone Farm** will be holding their Country Christmas on **Sunday, December 2** from 1-5. **Gary Fichter** will be playing the bagpipes and children can make a variety of seasonal crafts. The museum will be decorated and **Eric Wolff** will read "*A Christmas Carol*" while holiday treats are being prepared on the wood stove. The **WCHS** will also be having its **traditional open houses the first two weekends** in **December.**

Preservation Eastern, a student-run group from the Preservation Program at **Eastern Michigan University,** has announced its lectures for the next two months. On **Monday, October 15, Rebecca Binno** of the **Detroit Art Deco Society** will be speaking on Art Deco in Detroit at 4:15 PM in the Alumni Room at the McKenny Union. **On Monday, November 19, Brian Dunnigan** of the Clements Library will speak on "***Picturing Early Detroit, 1701-1838***," at 4 PM in the Tower Room of the McKenny Union. All events are free and open to the public.

The University of Michigan Detroit Observatory continues its fall lecture series with **Francis X. Blouin** of the Bentley Library speaking **Tuesday, October 30** at 7:00 at the Observatory on "***History and Memory: Problems in the Pursuit of the Past.***" On **Tuesday, November 13, Edward G. Voss** will speak on "***19th Century Plant Collectors in Michigan: Physicians as Botanists.***" And on **Tuesday, December 4** at 3PM, **Jan Longone** will speak on "***Dr. Chase and His Famous 19th Century Recipe Book.***" All lectures are free and at the Observatory. For more information call **734-763-2230** or visit their website at **www.DetroitObservatory.umich.edu**. *Open Houses are scheduled for Wednesdays October 24 and November 7 from 2-5 PM and Thursdays October 11, November 29, and December 13 from 11-2 PM.*

Around The County

Pioneer Day will be celebrated on **Sunday, October 14**, from noon-5 PM at the **Waterloo Farm Museum and Dewey School**. The 10-room restored farmhouse, dating from 1855, is part of a complex including a windmill, spring house, log house, baking and ice house, work shed, granary, corncrib and barn. They will come alive with demonstrations of spinning, corn shelling, weaving, blacksmithing, cider pressing, hearth cooking, sauerkraut making and more. Visitors can taste a sample of the famous **Waterloo Bean Soup** and then pick up a jar with the secret recipe. Call **734-426 9135** for directions and more information or visit their website at **http://scs.k12.mi.us/~waterloo.**

The **Saline Area Historical Society** Fall lecture series continues. On **Wednesday, October 17**, **Jim Schultz** of Education Outreach will speak on "***The Michigan Historical Center.***" On **Wednesday, November 14,** the third lecture in the fall series will be given by **Jim Cameron,** Saline High School history teacher, *on* ***"The Saline Valley Farms, 1932-1953."*** Meetings are at the Saline Depot at 7:30 and are free. Light refreshments are served. The Depot is at 402 N. Ann Arbor Street, near the corner of Bennett. For more information call **734-769-2219.**

The **Plymouth Historical Museum** had a grand re-dedication of the new building on **Sunday July 29. Margaret Dunning** was thankful to those who helped build and design the museum building she underwrote. The Museum is at 155 S. Main St. and is open year-round. Call **734-455-8940** or visit their website at **www.plymouth.lib.mi.us./~history.**

Chelsea will host its **Fall Moonlight Madness** on **Friday, October 26.** Explore Chelsea during this day of great bargains and special events in Downtown. Call **734-433-0354** for more information. From **November 30-December 2,** Chelsea will also celebrate its **Festival of Lights** with a tree lighting ceremony, visit from Santa, hayrides and other events. For more information on this event, call **734-475-1145.**

Beyond Washtenaw

On August 6, 2001, **Governor John Engler** signed bills creating the **Department of History, Arts and Libraries.** This is Michigan's 19th governmental department and its mission is to preserve, protect and promote Michigan's heritage. It combines several agencies including the Library of Michigan, the Mackinac Island State Park, Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), Office of Film and TV, and the Michigan Historical Center. The governor appointed **Dr. William M. Anderson** of Ludington to head this new department. Anderson is a great advocate of history and historic preservation and we look forward to this new era in the preservation of Michigan's architectural heritage.

The **Historical Society of Michigan** has opened a new office in Lansing in the Michigan State Medical Assn. Building at W. Saginaw and Abbott in East Lansing. They will continue to use the Ann Arbor office in the Tuomy House for a variety of activities. **Larry J. Wagenaar** is now the **Executive Director**, following **Hugh Gurney** who retired as of June 30. Gurney will continue to assist the Society as an unpaid consultant one day a week and will work especially on Michigan History Day. The HSM's newsletter has been redesigned, they have new computers and they are taking steps to improve their membership and fund raising activities. They can be reached at **hsm@hsofmich.org** or **517-324-1828 or www.hsofmich.org.**

Three events sponsored by the HSM include the **Annual Meeting** in **Detroit, October 5-7**; "**Mulling Over Michigan**" **October 18** at Grand Rapids Community College ($75); and the **2002 UP Conference** to be held in **Munising** in **June.**

Preservation Wayne announced in its latest newsletter that the **Mansions of Ferry** in Detroit are back on tour and that the long-awaited **Ferry Street Inn Bed and Breakfast** will open this month. PW was asked by the DIA 11 years ago to do a feasibility study and in 1992 the University Cultural Center Association began the development of the Inn. **Four** fully restored historic homes and two carriage barns will comprise the **42-room B&B.** Ownership is split between the DIA and the University Cultural Center Association (75/25%). This $6.5 million project is a testament to the many years of perseverance by PW. For reservations and information, call UCCA at **313-577-5088. PW** is also running its **Detroit Heritage Tours every Saturday** until **October 27**. These tours visit five historic neighborhoods of Detroit: Downtown, Eastern Market, Midtown, New Center and the Piquette-Amsterdam Auto Heritage District. All begin at 10 AM and cost $10. Children are free. Call PW at **313-577-7674** or visit their website at **www.preservationwayne.org.**

The **Ford Homes Tour of Seasons Past** will be held **Sunday, December 2** in **Dearborn.** Tickets are $10 in advance. Contact **syltillman@aol.com** for more information.

The **Tecumseh Area Historical Museum** has mounted a new exhibit. **"Dynamic Kernels"** explores the six-year community tithing project undertaken by Perry Hayden of Hayden Milling Co. from 1940-46. In his desire to show the benefits of tithing, Hayden showed how a cubic inch of wheat kernels could be transformed exponentially to produce thousands of acres of food. This was to feed the starving in war-torn Europe and also put Tecumseh and Lenawee County in the spotlight. The most famous promoter of this project was **Henry Ford** who was its major investor. He donated many acres of land and even built a small-scale mill in the **Macon** area (now co-owned by WCHS Board Member **Karen O'Neal** and her husband Joe). This was the last project Ford actively worked on before his death. **Dr. Charles Lindquist** will be speaking on the subject on **Thursday October 25** at 7:30. The exhibit will continue throughout the year. You can contact the museum at **517-423-2374** or visit their website at **www.historictecumseh.com.**

Your Museum

Many projects, large and small, are underway to get our Museum building ready for the winter. The fence is still problematic, and recent vandalism has not improved the situation. We have trim molding and fence posts that need replacement and painting and pickets that also need refurbishing. Algae and mildew on the north exterior basement wall will be cleaned (hopefully with help from Phi Alpha Kappa fraternity) and the drain kept clear from debris. The new signs are buckling and need to be fixed. We will also be trying to prevent drivers from cutting through our parking lot to avoid the stoplight at Main Street. This has become a serious problem for our gardeners and others who work at the Museum.

The upper back room will be insulated, or at least parts of it will. This will be in readiness for Susan Wineberg to move her extensive collection of Ann Arbor files to this space. It is hoped that these files will eventually serve as a resource for citizens to use for research purposes. Susan is also planning to move her computer here so that she can work on the newsletter from the museum.

Karen O'Neal went before the Building Board of Appeals regarding our sump pump problem. They have granted us a variance and are not requiring us to hook up to the storm sewer. We will be implementing the proposals made by Tilton Associates, which involves rerouting the sump towards Beakes. This will be done by late November and will be monitored regarding its effectiveness. Rain barrels may also be installed under the downspouts. Tilton will be hired to do this work. Their consulting up to this point has been donated to us. Thank you for all your help!

Oldest House?

We'd like to know where we can find the oldest house in Washtenaw County. We have some ideas but we'd like input from our readers. Please call Pauline at **734-662-9092,** or e-mail Susan Wineberg at **swines@umich.edu.** Make sure you can document your dates and are not going only on oral tradition.

Sad News

We've recently lost two more souls who made our county's history the focus of their lives and work. **Louis Doll,** author of many books about the county (Ann Arbor Newspapers, Frank Glazier and Chelsea, and St. Thomas Church) and a donor of many artifacts to our collections, died September 26 in Bay City. He was 90 years old and was Professor Emeritus of History at Delta College. Doll was born in Chelsea but grew up in Ann Arbor at 411 N. State Street, immortalized now as the home of playwright Arthur Miller when he lived in Ann Arbor. He also contributed several articles to this publication. He will be greatly missed by your editor.

Doris Milliman, Historian of Ypsilanti, died September 11. She was 96 and as the obituary noted, left a lasting legacy for the city of Ypsilanti: its history. Doris was an elder in the First Presbyterian Church, and also served three years on the Ypsilanti City Council. She was the first director of the Ypsilanti Historical Museum and in 1985 was appointed City Historian. She retired from that position in 1999. Doris also supported our activities and frequently attended our programs. She too will be sorely missed.

Winners Again!

We are blowing on our fingernails again, after hearing that we have been awarded the prestigious **Award of Merit** from the **Historical Society of Michigan** for our newsletter. **Susan Wineberg,** editor of the ***Impressions***, accepted the award on behalf of the WCHS at HSM's 127th Annual Meeting and gala dinner in Detroit **Friday, October 5.** They unanimously selected the newsletter as the best in the state from a large number of nominations. Our nomination was written by Grace Shackman (thank you!) and we are understandably proud of ourselves.

Back Issues Wanted

Have you saved all your issues of the ***Impressions,*** not being quite able to throw them out? Well, look no further for some relief. We are looking for complete issues for **March 1977, September 1988** and **March 1989.** If you have them, please call Pauline at **734-662-9092** or just drop them off. We'll be forever grateful.

Business Support

This month's issue of *Impressions* is co-sponsored by

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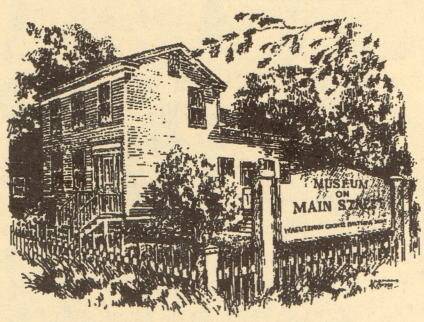

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